

REMARKS

In the outstanding Final Office Action, claims 34-66 were again rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claims 34-66 were also again rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as indefinite.

Upon entry of the present amendment, independent claims 34, 45 and 56 will have been amended in a manner consistent with suggestions made by the Examiner to Applicants' representative, Joshua M. Povsner, in a brief teleconference on March 9, 2007. Claims 39, 50 and 61 will also have been amended to ensure consistency with the features recited in the underlying independent claims 34, 45 and 56.

Applicants note that the claims have been amended beyond the amendments suggested by the Examiner in the teleconference on March 9, 2007, so as to enhance consistency with the features of the amended claims. However, the amended claims are believed to be in condition for allowance, at least based on the Examiner's previous indication of the allowability of the claims if amended consistent with the suggestions by the Examiner in the teleconference on March 9, 2007.

The herein-contained amendments should not be considered an indication of Applicants' acquiescence as to the propriety of any outstanding rejection or objection. Rather, the herein-contained amendments are made in order to advance prosecution and obtain early allowance of claims in the present application.

For example, with respect to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, the characterization of elements "essential to the invention" is not supported under the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. That is, the features characterized as "essential" in the Final Office Action are not in fact essential. Additionally, with respect to the rejection under 35

U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, the features of the claims asserted to be absent in the original specification are in fact disclosed with respect to the written description in relation to at least Figs. 2, 9 and 10.

Nevertheless, Applicants have amended the claims as explained above, and believe that each of the pending claims is now in condition for allowance, at least in view of the previous indication of the allowability of the claims if amended consistent with the suggestions by the Examiner in the teleconference on March 9, 2007. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of each of the outstanding rejections, as well as an indication of the allowability of each of the claims now pending.

Any amendments to claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,
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